

# Spirit

of Jefferson Farmer's Advocate

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## Old Standard LLC Petitions for Rezoning of Quarry Site

After Old Standard LLC was denied its annexation petition to Charles Town, the group has approached the county in hopes to provide commercial development at the old quarry site.

A Petition for Rezoning was filed in the courts to allow the property which is currently zoned rural with a portion of it zoned residential. The petition calls for the property to be rezoned commercial so that a business park and hotel can be developed on the property.

The 638 acres in question once served as the Millville Quarry and throughout the property there are visual reminders of that operation which was in operation until 1974. Mounds of burnt limestone are found throughout.

J. Michael Cassell, who serves as attorney for developers Gene Capriotti and Herb Jonkers, told Jefferson County Commissioners on Thursday that the property also served as the county's landfill at one time. There is extensive evidence of the fill that was used to cap that landfill when it was closed in 1962.

The developers have indicated that they will refrain from any residential growth on the property; rather, they plan to only

provide commercial properties to businesses wishing to relocate here.

According to the Petition for Rezoning document, the concept plan shows two million square feet of office space, research and development space and flex space at build-out. In addition, a first class hotel and conference center will be constructed overlooking the lake on the property.

"At build-out the business park would provide space for approximately 6,000 new jobs," the petition stated. The developers estimated the revenue from that build out to be approximately \$4.4 million through real estate and hotel taxes.

During the annexation process with the City of Charles Town, where the developers attempted to annex the property into the city, opposition was made not only to the annexation, but also to the proposed use of the property.

Representatives from the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, including Superintendent Don Campbell, spoke against the development, stating that land in question comprised what he referred to as "pristine battlefield land." The developers refuted that claim as

they showed slide after slide of lime residue and landfill waste.

The developers have been involved in voluntary remediation of the property with the Department of Environmental Protection to help clean up the property. Due to the extensive remediation, the National Park Service chose not to consider the site when they expanded park boundaries in 2003.

County commissioners listened to the proposal Thursday, but gave no indication how they would react to the rezoning request. Commissioner Greg Corliss agreed that there needs to be an employment center in the county where residents can work and live here, rather than commuting out of the area. Those kinds of higher paying jobs are what the developers of the property hope to have come to the area.

The developers will also donate river frontage for a county park with improvements such as restrooms, picnic tables, and a hiker/biker trail.

Commissioners asked if the group would make their informational presentation to the county's planning commission and the county's Development Authority.